

BUSHMASTER FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

The month of February can be summed up as a month of stability for the Bushmasters. We found our groove as our crew chiefs developed the most efficient shift-work cycles that I have ever seen, and the aviators settled into their night flying slots. March promises to bring some changes as our aviators switch to a new cycle, and we begin to send more of our Soldiers home for some well-deserved time off. One constant that we know will remain is your loving support of all of us, and I want to again thank you for all that you do to keep smiles on our faces and our spirits high. From the Valentines Day packages to the monthly birthday cards to the letters and emails you send, I can't tell you how much your thoughts and prayers mean to us each day.

Here's a quick run-down on what your Bushmasters have been up to since I last wrote. SFC Fales, SFC Everette, and CW2 Hayek remain at Fort Hood as they work to join us in the upcoming months. SFC Rivera joined us early in the month, and made a dramatic impact as he filled our First Sergeant position. He daily takes care of all of our administrative issues so that we can remain focused on the mission. SGT Ourada reenlisted for six years of continued service, and we held a company formation in his honor as we witnessed this awesome demonstration of commitment to our Army and our country. SGT Damuth, SGT Brooks, and SSG Strickland continue to expertly manage maintenance on a fleet of aircraft flying the most aggressive and robust schedule any of us have ever seen. We still haven't been able to wipe the smile off of SGT Jones' face as he continues to gloat over the Steelers' Super Bowl victory, but who can blame him? SPC Glass spent most of the month escorting local nationals around Camp Taji as they perform many services on our living areas to continue to improve our stay here. CPL Ferry and SPC Spencer safely returned from their two week adventure to Germany, Austria, and Italy with plenty of stories and pictures to keep us laughing for awhile. Next month, we'll send SPC McKittrick, SPC Celestino, CW2 Thoresen, SPC Hernandez, and SGT Jones home to the States to enjoy some time off with their loved ones. Just recently, we also had the opportunity to reward one of our crewchiefs, SPC Johnson, with a week long R & R trip to Qatar where he was able to take a break from all of us and check out another Middle Eastern country. SPC White continues to cut everyone's hair and wisely uses his free time to complete college credit hours. SPC Norman, SPC McFalls, and SPC DeGuzman somehow manage to bring a smile to my face everyday with their off-the-wall comments or the pranks they pull on the other guys.

As for the pilots, CW3 Rondeau and CPT Nilsen spent the majority of this past month on the maintenance shift which they both thank me daily for putting them on. CW3 Polidore found out that he and Joshlynn are expecting another little boy later this summer. Poor CW2 Swim had to fly with me the entire month, so he's definitely looking forward to the month of March. CW2 Rose is now on her sixth week of waiting for her Yankee Candle Company order. If you care to send her candles yourself, I hear she's fond of black licorice scent. CW3 Haver received his unit issued Oakley sunglasses this month, so he's good for the rest of the deployment. Aviation Brigade stole CW3 Day for a week this month to investigate a UAV accident, so it's been good to have him back in the mix since completing that assignment. 1LT Hayes sat in for me as the commander at most of the battalion meetings this month, so I'll spend most of the month of March fixing all of the stuff he forgot to do while he was off visiting his wife Anna at another camp. WO1 Plucinski became our voting assistance officer this month, so all of your Bushmasters are about to get registered to vote and set-up for absentee voting later next fall. CW3 Henderscheid and CW2 Sanders continue to perfect their guitar playing skills, and are actually pretty awesome to listen to. Lastly, CW2 Mathis and CW2 Kellner continue to be their content selves, flying whenever I ask them to and doing a tremendous job.

As you can hopefully tell, even though we deeply miss being home with you all, we're hanging in there and doing pretty well here at Camp Taji. Thank you again for your love and support, and please continue to keep all of the Gambler Guns and the Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Division in your thoughts and prayers.

--Bush 6